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ABSTRACT

This report presents 13 commentaries on issues related to intercollegiate athletics that were delivered to institutional chief executive officers every 2 weeks during the first half of 2002. The commentaries address: "Division I Academic Reform"; "The Gambling Threat"; "Amateurism: Re-Examination"; "Student-Athlete Issues"; "Continuing Education"; "The Diversity Hiring Failure"; "The Governance Process: Does Form Follow Function?"; "Is College Basketball in Prime Health or Just Prime Time?"; "College Football and Ma Bell"; "The Funding Dilemma"; "Reputation and Clean Restrooms"; and "The Will of the Membership." (SM)

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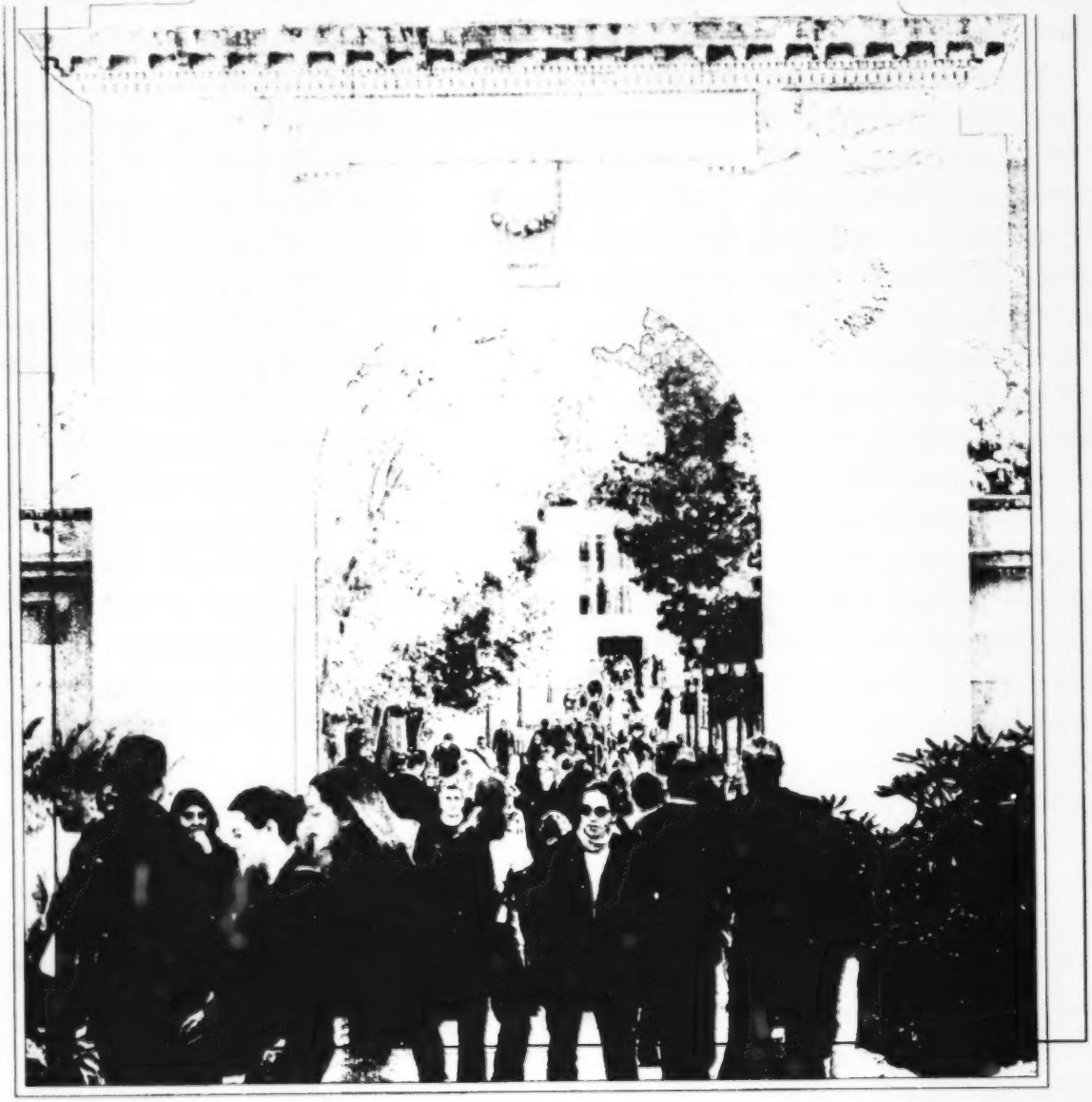

President to President
The Will to Act Project

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Will to Act

As overly broad and dark as was the picture of intercollegiate athletics painted by the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics report in the summer of 2001, the truest stroke in "A Call to Action" may have been the challenge: "The search now is for the **will to act**."

Although there will be disagreements over the details, it is clear that college presidents at NCAA member institutions are frustrated and even embarrassed by too large a number of highly publicized issues that at best advertise a blatant hypocrisy and at worst represent negligent contempt for the mission and good name of higher education. Low graduation rates among high-profile athletes, escalating salaries for the most elite of football and basketball coaches, the tension between the amateur status of student athletes and the drive for commercial dollars are among the concerns that the public, media and university administrators all note when they describe the failure of intercollegiate athletics to live up to its values. All agree that serious attention to meaningful reform in a number of areas is required.

Will to Act

The good news is that all three divisions of the NCAA appear prepared to take action in ways that will result in real changes. Divisions II and III have already developed strategic plans that set goals, define expectations and provide benchmarks for measuring progress. The Division I Board of Directors Task Force has begun that effort. Arguably, it is in Division I — and Division I-A in particular — where the greatest tension exists between necessary change and a "don't rock the boat" comfort in the status quo. Nonetheless, issues around academic standards and performances, student-athlete welfare, diversity hiring, gambling, amateurism, financial management and the reputation of intercollegiate athletics touch all divisions, all member institutions and all those individuals engaged in college sports.

As I considered what contribution I could make to the future viability of intercollegiate athletics during the last few months of my tenure as NCAA president, I was compelled to provide a series of commentaries on a variety of issues confronting college sports. These essays framed the issues as clearly and succinctly as possible; proposed one or more approaches to resolution; and, while recognizing the need for pragmatic solutions, recommended that the values we have adopted in our bylaws guide all final decisions.

Most of all, I hoped to encourage the **will to act**. If we lose that will, our efforts to align all the necessary components for reform are likely to result in the mediocrity that too often has marred previous attempts at lasting reform.

These commentaries were delivered to institutional chief executive officers every two weeks during the first half of 2002. We are providing this collection of all 13 essays for those who want to use the material for reference purposes.

One of the great benefits in a change of leadership in any organization is the opportunity to assess fairly where we are and set a new course for the future. I look forward to my part in this transition.

Cedric W. Dempsey
NCAA President

Division I Academic Reform

The bane of intercollegiate athletics over the last 20 years has been the charge that student-athletes are not being educated. From newspaper editorials to academic panels, there has been steady and nearly universal concern that athletes are not really students.

All of that, frankly, is because Division I men's basketball and — to a lesser degree — football student-athletes are graduating at rates below or far below the rest of the student body or other student-athletes in Division I. The fact that Division I student-athletes on average are graduating at a higher rate than the rest of the student body (and considerably better if you remove men's basketball and football from the calculations) is lost in the noise that surrounds the dismal results of the most athletically elite student-athletes at the most athletically successful colleges and universities.

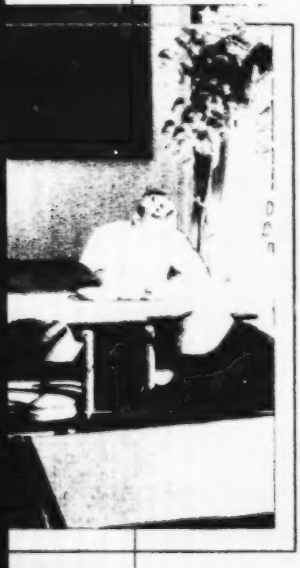
This is an issue where national policy largely has been a dramatic success. Graduation rates of all student-athletes have increased by six percentage points since Proposition 48 — the first initial-eligibility standard that combined grade-point average in a set of core courses with results on standardized tests to determine freshman eligibility. Graduation rates of African-American males have risen by nine percentage points. Both of these figures have risen faster than their counterparts in the student body. And the latest data — the basis for recommendations presented elsewhere in this document — tell us that even greater success is available with new national policy that focuses more on the college experience to predict progress toward graduation than the high-school performance snapshot we have relied upon the last 15 years. In other words, for the majority of student-athletes, the best is yet to come if colleges and universities adopt as national policy the new initial- and continuing-eligibility standards under consideration.

Why has a national policy that has been successful in almost all sports been less successful (see the accompanying table) at increasing graduation rates for men's basketball and football student-athletes? The only rational explanation is that something about the recruiting or practice of those sports at the local level have defeated an otherwise sound policy at the national level. The new standards under consideration are worthy of support, and I encourage each of you to acquaint yourself with the research and recommendations (see the accompanying table and description of recommendations) and speak with an emphatic presidential voice in favor of these changes. But don't let better research and a more scientific approach deceive you into believing that these new national policies cannot also be defeated by local practices.

The Division I governance structure is also considering a set of incentives and disincentives that will add starch to the fabric of eligibility standards. These are important and also deserve your support.

However, the real **will to act** on this issue is the will to set local standards for recruiting, local expectations for enrolled student-athletes and local accountability for linking outstanding athletic performance with real academic success. In my opinion, there are three areas you should examine locally to ensure real academic success:

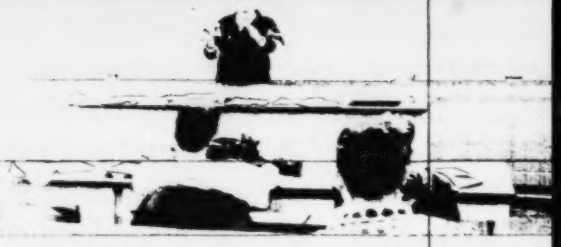
• Recruiting Practices. Do you have a "profile" of the students you are seeking to recruit so as to promote the admissions of only



Comparative Graduation Rates

	1984 Cohort Div. I	1984 Cohort Div. I-A	1994 Cohort Div. I	1994 Cohort Div. I-A
Student body	53	56	56	60
Student-athletes*	52	53	58	59
Male student body	51	54	54	57
Male S/As	47	48	51	52
White male student body	54	56	57	59
White male SAs	55	55	56	45
African-American male student body	28	33	31	37
African-American male S/As	33	33	42	42
Male basketball S/As	38	33	40	32
White male basketball S/As	53	49	52	49
African-American male basketball S/As	29	23	35	24
Football S/As	46	47	49	51
White football S/As	56	56	56	60
African-American football S/As	34	35	43	45

** Student-Athletes (S/As)*



those student-athletes who have a reasonable chance of graduating? Are your coaches instructed not to recruit prospects who publicly indicate that they plan to play college sports only until the first opportunity they have to turn professional?

• Academic Support Programs. Do academic support programs for student-athletes report through the chief academic officer on campus? Are student-athletes who are admitted with below-average academic profiles provided with the necessary academic support to be successful? The Division I athletics certification program contains an element on this subject, and I encourage you to have the proper academic authorities on campus familiarize themselves with the issues.

• Athletic Practice Policies and Student-Athlete Time Demands. Does your campus have a policy that prohibits or restricts academically at-risk student-athletes from being able to participate fully in all practice opportunities?

Our constituents hold intercollegiate athletics accountable in ways they don't other departments on the campus. It has always been and will continue to be so. The public, media, faculty and fans clearly expect that colleges and universities will educate the student-athletes in their charge. It is time to make good on the promise.

The academic consultants who have been working on new national policy have made great strides in terms of understanding what the research tells us and how to apply the data. The challenge for you as chief executive officers on campus is to make sure your standards and practices align not only with the letter but also with the spirit of initial eligibility and progress toward a degree. Examine your recruiting, academic support and student-athlete time-demand policies against the questions above. If you can't answer yes to all or most of them, I suspect you will fall short of truly educating your student-athletes.

Academic Standards

The Association's academic standards have been a work in progress for many years. With the introduction of Proposition 48 in the early 1980s, the Association committed itself to studying the impact of its rules on student-athletes. This commitment has resulted in a wealth of data by which to make thoughtful decisions regarding the types of standards that will support academic success. Recent legal challenges have been resolved favorably, clearing the way for academic reform.

During its April 1999 meeting, the NCAA Division I Board of Directors charged a membership group of academic consultants with reviewing the Association's academic standards. The Board provided the consultants with the following directive: Identify standards that increase graduation rates while minimizing the adverse impact on minority groups. These two objectives with suggested solutions are outlined as follows:

- Maximizing Graduation Rates. To raise graduation rates, greater emphasis should be placed on the continuing-eligibility requirements. The focus should shift away from the concept of students maintaining eligibility and instead center on progress toward degree requirements. Raising the current standards will assure that students who remain eligible for four years are in an excellent position to complete their degree after five years. The Division I standards should be revised to require freshmen to complete 24 semester hours with a 1.800 grade-point average and to increase the annual percent-of-degree requirements from the current 25, 50, 75 percent after years two, three and four to 40, 60 and 80 percent after those years. In addition, an increase in the number of core courses high-school students must complete to be eligible as freshmen should be adopted. Academicians have long recognized that core courses are a key preparatory component for young people to succeed in college. Moving from the current 13 to 14 or more core courses will help ensure that better-prepared students are entering our colleges and universities.
- Minimizing Adverse Impact. Division I should eliminate use of the "cut score" in the initial-eligibility standards. The use of cut scores on tests is viewed as a misuse of tests by the testing agencies and violates standard practice as outlined by the educational and technical community for use of standardized tests. As an educational association, the NCAA should be at the forefront in educational standards. Proper use of the tests must be a critical element of the Association's academic reform agenda.

Incentives and Disincentives

As the Division I membership looks at academic reform, additional measures beyond the standards themselves should be considered. The Association must help create an environment and culture in intercollegiate athletics that supports the high standards established. To achieve this aim, the development of incentives and penalties that reward academic success and promote academic welfare should be adopted. Such an incentive and disincentive model could include access to championships or revision of the revenue-distribution formula for athletics programs that achieve either unacceptable or admirable levels of academic success.

Time Demands

Finally, these initiatives should be augmented with a thorough review of the time demands on student-athletes. A significant component of the Association's commitment to the academic success of student-athletes should be our assurance that adequate time is provided for academic pursuits.

Those who would like more detailed information on these issues may visit the NCAA Web site at www.ncaa.org.

Summary Review

Initial- and Continuing-Eligibility Standards and Incentives/Penalties

[Modified as a result of January 2002 NCAA Division I Board of Directors' meeting.]

Initial-Eligibility Standards

Current	Proposed
High-school academic record used to predict college graduation.	High-school academic record used to predict academic success as measured by first- or second- year college performance.
Core courses – 13.	Core courses – 14.
Student-athlete's GPA and test score determine eligibility. Sliding scale, with "cut" points at 820 SAT/68 sum ACT and 2.000 GPA.	Student- athlete's GPA and test score determine eligibility. Sliding scale, which retains 2.000 GPA cut.[1]
Graduate from high school.	Graduate from high school.

Incentives/Penalties

Current	Proposed
Students "earn" eligibility by meeting academic and other expectations.	Students "earn" eligibility by meeting academic and other expectations.
Nonqualifiers cannot receive athletically related financial aid during their first year of enrollment.	Nonqualifiers cannot receive athletically related financial aid during their first year of enrollment.
Some students can "earn" a fourth season back.	Some students can "earn" a fourth season back.

Other

	Proposed
	Additional increases to be discussed and presented in 2005.
	Effective date: Students entering fall 2003 are subject to current or proposed standard. In fall 2005, they are subject to the proposed standard.

1 – Alternative test score cuts (i.e., 620 SAT) or fully extended scale still being discussed, as are appropriate coordinates.

Continuing Eligibility Standards

Current	Proposed
Continuing-eligibility rules.	Progress-toward-degree rules.
Continuing-eligibility rules work independent of initial-eligibility rules.	Initial- and continuing-eligibility standards should be coupled together to create a "seamless" set of academic standards.
A student's continuing eligibility can be determined based on a single year's performance (e.g., 24 hours last two semesters); 25-50-75% rules less effective in ensuring adequate progress to complete degree.	A student's continuing eligibility to be determined based on cumulative academic performance. Requirements ensure that student-athletes who meet yearly eligibility requirements will complete at least 120 credit hours after five academic years, with the corresponding GPA that satisfies institutional graduation requirements.
Freshman year expectations – 24 semester hours/36 quarter hours, good academic standing.	Freshman year expectations – 24 semester/36 quarter hours, with at least a 1.800 GPA and good academic standing.
Sophomore, junior, senior year expectations – 25/50/75 percent of degree completed.	Sophomore, junior and senior-year expectations - 40-60-80 percentage of degree completed - At 40 percent mark (start of third year) – GPA must meet required GPA to graduate

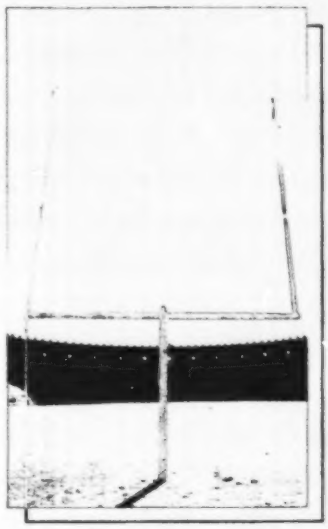
Incentives/Penalties

Students "earn" eligibility by meeting academic and other expectations.	Students "earn" eligibility by meeting academic and other expectations.
	Additional incentives/penalties are being explored, including scholarship "replacement" policies.
	Effective date: Students initially enrolling in August 2003 are subject to new requirements. Currently enrolled student-athletes grandfathered under current requirements.

Other

Current	Proposed
Designation of degree – start of third year.	Designation of degree – start of third year.
75% - 25% credit hours during academic year.	TBD.
90% - 95% GPA rule.	GPA required to graduate must be maintained starting third year of enrollment.
Annual certification.	TBD (consideration to term-by-term).

The Gambling Threat



There is no older malady of intercollegiate athletics — or sports in general, for that matter — than sports wagering. Gambling on sports likely has been around since man first tested his physical prowess against some challenge. In fact, I have had serious-minded individuals suggest to me that betting on college sports has increased the popularity of college sports. But the point often missed is that sports wagering is an insidious, dangerous behavior. It can ruin lives and the integrity of sports as a whole. And its greatest ally is our indifference to the warning signs.

Intercollegiate athletics has been no more immune to the ravages of sports wagering than any other athletics enterprise. In the last decade, we have had two major point-shaving cases at two of our most visible member institutions. At the same time, our efforts have intensified to identify the depth of the problem, work with law enforcement agencies, collaborate with other sports entities, educate athletics administrators and student-athletes, legislate penalties for participation in athletics gambling, and generally sound an alarm about the risk and threat associated with sports wagering. In the last two years, we have given significant support to efforts by the United States Congress to fight Internet gambling and to end legalized sports wagering in Las Vegas.

The bottom line: It would be a boon to our efforts in fighting sports wagering if there was no legal open book on intercollegiate athletics anywhere in the country. It would send a clear and consistent message — one that is confused today by the glamour Las Vegas brings to sports wagering — that betting on student-athletes is wrong. It's wrong all the time. It's wrong everywhere.

But as with so many other issues, the real **will to act** must be found locally on the campuses of the 977 NCAA member institutions. The deadly disease that is invading the body of intercollegiate athletics is the illegal bookmaking operation that has become a cottage industry on virtually every college campus or the Internet gambling that takes place in the privacy of a dorm room. The very thing that every athletics administrator fears the most, the bookie who entices a student-athlete to wager, is living as a parasite within the comfortable confines of the college campus. The wagers produce winners until the student-athlete is hooked, and then the wagers become losses, the losses become debt, and the debt becomes an obligation that the student-athlete can meet only by manipulating the outcome of a contest. And the next scandal in intercollegiate athletics is underway.

No matter how many resources the national office brings to this issue, the war must be waged on the campus. Too many higher education administrators deny that the problem even exists on their campuses. Yet, law enforcement tells us that no campus in America is secure. They believe that student bookie operations exist at every institution of higher education in all three divisions. As with most other remedies, the first step is acknowledging the problem and then seeking help. For more information about how to combat illegal sports wagering on your campus and how the NCAA can help, go to the NCAA Web site's enforcement/gambling page.

Here are eight questions you should ask on your campus that will help determine whether you have an illegal gambling problem. And remember, if there are illegal bookmaking operations on or near campus, organized crime is probably present as well.

- Do your students, staff and faculty understand that bookmaking is an illegal activity and is not acceptable on your campus?
- Do your campus police know your position on campus bookmaking and your expectations for engaging and pursuing the problem?
- Have you asked your campus police what their informants say about the amount of sports wagering that is going on?
- Have you taken a hard look at reports of assault on campus? Physical intimidation and assault are typical ways bookmakers try to collect from bettors who haven't paid.
- Are your campus police involved with local authorities who are developing information about bookmaking at local sports bars and other establishments frequented by students?
- Have you checked campus newspapers for Internet gambling advertisements?
- Have you checked public campus computers to see if wagering sites are bookmarked?
- Have you asked your student services personnel, residence hall advisors, campus police and athletics administrators to report regularly on what they have learned and what they are doing about illegal sports wagering on your campus?

We may never be rid of legal or illegal betting on college sports, but we cannot remain indifferent to the risk and threat. And we cannot wait for someone else to cure the illnesses that thrive in our own back yards.

eurism
Re-examination

Over the last few years, I have encouraged a reexamination of the Association's amateurism bylaws. This discussion is important, it seems to me, not because the definition of amateurism is flawed. In fact, the Association's Principle of Amateurism is fairly straightforward. Participation in college sports "should be motivated primarily by education and by the physical, mental and social benefits to be derived" and "student participation in intercollegiate athletics is an avocation," Article 2.9 of the NCAA Constitution says. That language has changed little since 1922 when it was adopted by member institutions, and it rings as true to the mission of higher education today as it did then.

My concern has been more with how we have applied that definition. The body of bylaws that support the concept of amateurism includes numerous exceptions, waivers and sport-by-sport considerations that have created enough inconsistencies to make the amateurism rules confusing to the membership, media and public. The current discussions have focused on expectations for pre-enrolled prospects and, in a more limited way, enrolled student-athletes.

At the 2001 NCAA Convention, Division II approved legislation that allowed prospective student-athletes prior to collegiate enrollment to enter their name in a professional draft, be drafted, sign a contract, play professionally and be paid for doing so. If they change their minds, they can return to play as an amateur in Division II by completing a year of residency; they also lose a year of eligibility for each year of organized competition. This past January, Division III passed similar legislation for pre-enrolled prospects except that the individual cannot be paid as a professional. Divisions II and III also allow prospects and their student-athletes to receive Operation Gold (Olympic) prize money and to receive a fee for giving lessons.

In my view, these were steps in the right direction for those divisions.

Division I has had a protracted debate on these issues. Finding a consensus among the division's members has proven to be difficult, and the governance group working on this issue has worked hard to find common ground among sports on how prospects and enrolled student-athletes can or cannot benefit from their athletics talents. For a more complete discussion on the actual proposals that will move forward to the membership, see the accompanying list.

The operating principle for the Division I proposals centers on the notion that an amateur should not profit from athletics participation. To that end, a prospect could enter a professional draft, be drafted, sign a contract, compete with professionals and accept

Division I Statement of Intent

Competition at the professional level should be permissible for prospective student-athletes; however, to maintain amateur status, an athlete cannot profit from his or her participation (that is, accept any compensation, including prize money, above actual and necessary expenses).

Proposed Permissible Pre-Enrollment Activities for Division I

- Allow prospects to compete with professionals, provided the only compensation received is for actual and necessary expenses. [Organized-competition rule: This component of the reform package restricts competition on a professional team to a one-year period. If a prospect competes for one year, he or she loses one season of eligibility and must fulfill an academic year in residence upon enrollment. If a prospect competes for more than one year, he or she is ineligible.]
- Allow prospects to sign a professional contract.
- Allow prospects to enter a professional draft and be drafted.
- Allow prospects to accept prize money based on place finish up to actual and necessary expenses.
- Allow prospects to accept money for athletics participation (for example, expenses from a professional team tied to the professional competition) up to actual and necessary expenses.

Proposed Permissible Post-Enrollment Activities for Division I

- Allow enrolled student-athletes to obtain a loan based on their future earnings potential as a professional athlete. The amount cannot exceed $20,000.
- The NCAA will pay the disability insurance premium for exceptional student-athletes who need disability insurance.
- Allow all enrolled student-athletes to accept fees for lessons in their sport.

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compensation that doesn't exceed actual and necessary expenses. Prospects could accept prize money that doesn't exceed actual and necessary expenses.

Here's what I like about this approach:

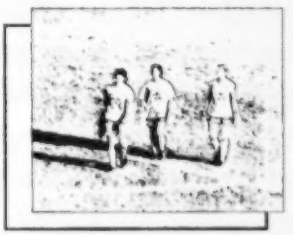
- Athletes in team sports and individual sports are treated the same. Current legislation gives a clear advantage to those in individual sports.
- It provides greater flexibility for a limited number of "failed professionals" to commit to intercollegiate athletics and to pursuit of a college degree as an alternative.
- The Association's principle of athletics as an avocation is not violated and application of the principle is the same regardless of sport.

In addition, proposals will also move forward that will allow enrolled student-athletes destined for early-round draft picks to obtain a loan of not more than $20,000 based on future earnings potential. Further, there is a proposal for the Association to pay the disability insurance premiums for qualifying student-athletes. Both proposals recognize the special needs of exceptional student-athletes. And all enrolled student-athletes could accept a fee for giving lessons in their sport under specific conditions. The intent is to treat student-athletes the same as all other students who can receive payment for giving lessons in their areas of expertise.

Based on the number of eligibility reinstatement requests we receive for prospective student-athletes caught in the type of situations addressed by these "re-regulation" proposals, many of your athletics programs would agree with this moderate approach. You have asked that special consideration be given to the failed professional, and you have asked that student-athletes be treated the same as other students on your campus.

The **will-to-act** challenge for you as a CEO is to keep an open mind as the debate on these issues begins. Do they treat all prospects and enrolled student-athletes with greater fairness and equity than the current rules? Do they affirm the principle that amateur athletes should not profit from competition? Do they offer a second chance for young athletes who may discover that the glamour of a professional career is more glitter than gold?

I urge Division I CEOs to contact your conference representative on the Board of Directors to register your support of these proposals.



Student-Athlete Issues

When I have talked with student-athletes at the NCAA Foundation Leadership Conference or those on the national Student-Athlete Advisory Committees, I invariably hear about the "trust gap" that exists between these individuals and the coaches and administrators with whom they interact on campus.

They talk about the intrusion of athletics on their time, especially personal time. They talk about their inability to integrate into the rest of the student body because of time demands and the isolation imposed upon them by coaches. They discuss the socialization and "culturalization" failure they feel because their world is rarely allowed to expand beyond the width of the field or court. They talk about the disconnect between their coaches' recruiting promises and the reality of expectations that turn them into athlete-students far more often than student-athletes.

They are describing their lives at colleges and universities where people of good will — faculty, staff, coaches and administrators — are perceived to be manipulating the lives of students for the lowly purpose of enhancing an institution's athletics image.

What's wrong with this picture?

What's wrong may be that our own time demands and competitive pressures have overwhelmed our good intentions to treat student-athletes as more than pawns in the athletics chess game. The challenge for CEOs is to reassert control on campus of athletics programs.

- Set expectations for collective and individual behavior of those involved in your athletics programs that aligns with the principles of student-athlete welfare.
- Assure that your campus student-athlete advisory committee feels free to express concerns without retribution and with the expectation of cure from unreasonable demands.
- Demand that exit interviews are conducted for all student-athletes who leave your program to determine where failings may be occurring. Review the results of those interviews.
- Consider moving academic support for student-athletes into a faculty responsibility outside of athletics.
- Become champions of the CHAMPS/Life Skills program on your campus as a way to grow the whole student-athlete.
- See the accompanying list for other suggestions.

If we believe that our behavior should be governed by our principles, we have a clear mandate for our relationships with student-athletes. Article 2.2 of the NCAA Constitution sets out a comprehensive description of what constitutes student-athlete welfare. Member institutions are to conduct their athletics programs "in a manner designed to protect and enhance the physical and educational welfare of student-athletes." The full text of Article 2.2 accompanies this essay.

Presidents can take several steps to assure that student-athlete welfare is not compromised.

- Support the development of and provide resources for an effective student-athlete advisory committee (SAAC).

  Meet with the SAAC at least once per year

  Require that your athletics director provide you with a quarterly report on the activities and issues of your campus SAAC.

  Require that your coaches support participation in your SAAC.

- Support the educational, social and developmental goals of the student-athlete:

  Require each coach to provide student-athletes time to be a student and to enforce the 20-hour rule to the spirit of the rule and not just the letter of the rule.

  Support the CHAMPS/Life Skills program required on each Division I campus.

  Require athletics directors, compliance staff and the faculty athletic representatives to monitor on a monthly basis the time demands on student-athletes to avoid exceeding the 20-hour per week during the season.

  Conduct a confidential "climate survey" of all student-athletes annually focusing on time demands and other issues (for example, expectations for voluntary workouts, encroachment of "year-round" athletics on time with family).

- Require every team to spend time with the athletics director and faculty athletics representative at the beginning of each year to discuss the institution's expectations of the student-athlete on campus. The coach must be at this session.

In a very real sense, this principle represents a promise that when a member institution recruits prospects to its campus, the student-athlete can expect to be treated with the attention and dignity set forth in the constitution. The question at hand is whether NCAA member schools are keeping the promise. On nearly a daily basis, intercollegiate athletics are assailed from one direction or another with the assertion that, in fact, the promise is not being kept.

Within the last year, we have seen:

- The development of the Collegiate Athletes Coalition, aligned with the United States Steelworkers, created to "pursue basic protections for student-athletes," including time demands.
- A Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics report, calling for reform that starts with "respect for the dignity of the young men and women who compete and the conviction that they occupy a legitimate place as students on our campuses."
- An HBO "Real Sports" program on purported deficiencies of the Association's catastrophic-injury insurance program.
- A CBS "60 Minutes" program on student-athlete welfare issues that examined the gap between the value of an athletics scholarship and the full cost of attendance;
- A hearing before a subcommittee of the United States Congress that inquired about a range of concerns regarding student-athletes; and
- An ESPN "Outside the Lines" program that revealed low or nonexistent graduation rates among African-American male basketball student-athletes at 36 Division I member institutions.

These are all issues that represent a level of "customer dissatisfaction" that if left unattended by a CEO could spell the end of any enterprise. The **will to act** for CEOs at NCAA member institutions is to become a guardian of student-athlete interests. If your student-athletes don't have your ear or the ear of those on your campus who can help them with their concerns, they surely will find the ear of someone or some group that can.

Article 2.2 of the NCAA Constitution

Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be conducted in a manner designed to protect and enhance the physical and educational welfare of student-athletes.

Overall Educational Experience.

It is the responsibility of each member institution to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete's educational experience.

Cultural Diversity and Gender Equity.

It is the responsibility of each member institution to establish and maintain an environment that values cultural diversity and gender equity among its student-athletes and intercollegiate athletics department staff.

Health and Safety.

It is the responsibility of each member institution to protect the health of and provide a safe environment for each of its participating student-athletes.

Student-Athlete/Coach Relationship.

It is the responsibility of each member institution to establish and maintain an environment that fosters a positive relationship between the student-athlete and coach.

Fairness, Openness and Honesty.

It is the responsibility of each member institution to ensure that coaches and administrators exhibit fairness, openness and honesty in their relationships with student-athletes.

Student-Athlete Involvement.

It is the responsibility of each member institution to involve student-athletes in matters that affect their lives.

Continuing Education

A group of college presidents recently estimated that they and their colleagues spend approximately 2 percent of their time on average on anything having to do with intercollegiate athletics. But consider these facts:

- The governance restructuring that took place in 1997 was designed to emphasize presidential involvement and control of college sports.
- Campus athletics programs may be the only contact a college or university has with some of its constituents.
- In normal times, athletics programs can be a significant public relations and gift-giving boon for a university.
- In times of crisis, athletics programs may become the bane of a college president's life.

A nearly undeniable fact is that college sports typically draw a disproportionate amount of attention to a campus compared to the small amount of attention college sports receives from the chief executive officer. Unfortunately, intercollegiate athletics often is buried among many other high-profile issues until, without warning, a crisis arises in the athletics department. Suddenly the crisis requires the immediate attention of what may be an uninformed, inexperienced and previously uninvolved CEO.

The bottom line is that college sports is a $4 billion enterprise that no longer can operate in the background for college presidents.

A clear and present need exists for a new "continuing education" program for college presidents. The purpose of such a program is to challenge presidents to rethink the context and role of intercollegiate athletics in higher education — to be a part of, rather than apart from, higher education and the key issues that affect college sports at any given time.

Clearly, more must be done. When I have discussed my concern about the lack of presidential understanding of intercollegiate athletics issues with the Division I Board of Directors, there has been general agreement. For example, the Board agrees that college presidents need to have a clear understanding of:

Proposed Presidential Education Model

New college presidents

The NCAA would partner with the American Council on Education training for new college presidents to offer seminars on intercollegiate athletics, including these topics: sport ethics, current issues, governance of institutions and associations, influences of outside groups, fiscal integrity, philosophy of intercollegiate sport, and presidential control.

Existing college presidents

Educational efforts directed at existing college presidents would not necessarily take place in person. Other effective means of communication (for example, e-mail, the Internet) would be used to provide information on key issues in a timely fashion.

Advisors to college presidents

An educational partnership would be established between the NCAA and professional organizations to which various advisors for college presidents belong (for example, NASPA, NASULGC, NACUBO, NACUA). Targeted individuals would include provosts, business and finance officers, university attorneys, and student personnel administrators. In addition, the educational programs would be offered to the ACE Fellows.

New members of NCAA presidential bodies

A broad-based, comprehensive orientation session would be presented to presidents new to the NCAA governance structure. Upon completion of the orientation module, the presidents would be responsible for disseminating information regarding key NCAA issues to other presidents in their respective conferences. This "conference communication tree" would allow for president-to-president discussion on pressing issues facing intercollegiate athletics and higher education.

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- How athletics programs can and should support the educational mission.
- The 16 principles governing intercollegiate athletics.
- What "institutional control" means.
- How national policy is created in all three divisions.
- How the revenues generated by the NCAA are spent.
- The conference role in governing college sports and how conferences relate to the NCAA.
- The expectations for faculty involvement.
- How the enforcement and infractions process works.
- What the financial realities are for conducting intercollegiate athletics programs.
- Where national or conference policy ends and local responsibility begins.

I propose an education model with components to address four important groups: (1) new college presidents; (2) existing college presidents; (3) advisors to college presidents; and (4) new members to the NCAA presidential bodies. See the accompanying list for details.

This is a modest beginning, and your feedback to the questions below would be especially helpful on this topic:

- Is the President-to-President Web site an appropriate and sufficient communication method?
- What other communications vehicles would help keep presidents up to date on the current issues facing intercollegiate athletics and higher education?
- Would you prefer that educational programs be offered in conjunction with other higher education associations to which you may belong or solely through the NCAA?
- Should other professional organizations be targeted?
- Would you support an education model as described in the attachment?

No one appreciates more than I the tug of war college presidents feel on their time and attention. But, if we are to reconnect the athletics programs at NCAA member institutions to their academic missions (and keep them connected), then college presidents must find the **will to act** to commit to a program of continuing education.

The Diversity Hiring Failure

By almost every measure, the effort to bring ethnic and gender diversity to key positions in intercollegiate athletics has failed. Based on the latest data from the 2001-02 academic year, here are four data points that say volumes about the hiring practices at NCAA member institutions (See the accompanying list of additional statistics).

- Number of women athletics directors in 305 Division I athletics programs: 31.
- Number of black men in athletics director positions in all divisions, 836 programs [historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) excluded]: 29.
- Number of black Division I head football coaches today (HBCUs excluded): 3.
- Percentage of new coaching jobs among women's teams filled by males since 1998: 80.

Get the picture?

There are bright spots, certainly. There has been a steady increase among Division I men's basketball head coaches, where a total of 93 black males are in the top coaching spot. It also is tempting to look at the student-athlete population at NCAA member institutions and claim a victory for diversity. The number of Blacks participating in college sports in 2000-01 was better than 27 percent, nearly two percent more than the year before. And in terms of gender, the number of female student-athletes has been growing steadily, increasing by more than 10 percentage points in the last decade. But the number of female student-athletes (41 percent) is still not in proportion to the number of females in the student body at NCAA members schools – one of the three options for complying with Title IX.

As impressive as the growth in diversity among student-athletes has been, the numbers tend to point out just how disproportionate the hiring of ethnic minority and female coaches and administrators has been. The truth is that NCAA colleges and universities are much more enthusiastic about diversity when they are recruiting

By The Numbers

The results of efforts to hire ethnic minorities of either gender in either head coaching or athletics director positions are dismal.

- Number of black head coaches in all sports (13,780 positions available, including 6,819 in women's sports; historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) excluded: 737.
- Number of minorities other than Blacks in athletics director positions in all divisions: 16.

Not only are women not making progress among head coaching ranks, they are losing ground over the last 30 years.

- Number of women head coaches in all sports (15,454 positions available, including 7,461 in women's sports): 3,611.
- Percentage of women in head coaching spots for women's teams in 1972 when Title IX was enacted: 90.
- Percentage of women in head coaching spots for women's teams today: 45.6.
- Percentage of women in head coaching sports for men's teams: Less than 2.

Divisions II and III are doing no better.

- Number of Division II black head coaches (2,805 positions available, excluding HBCUs): 117.
- Number of Division II women head coaches (3,195 positions available): 636.
- Number of Division III black head coaches (6,310 positions available, excluding HBCUs): 204.
- Number of Division III women head coaches (5,074 positions available): 1,423.

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student-athletes than when they are hiring athletics personnel. The result has caused some to criticize intercollegiate athletics for (at best) failing to provide minority and female role models for significant portions of their student-athlete population or (at worst) perpetuating a "plantation environment" in which female and black student-athletes – who participate disproportionately in revenue-producing sports – are under the eye of predominantly white male overseers.

Those are harsh accusations and, one hopes, unworthy of educated, sensitive campus leaders. Yet, the numbers tell a story from which few institutions can walk away blameless.

I believe that college and university presidents should use two tests in judging their personal commitment to hiring for diversity. Until each campus puts its hiring practices to these tests, we likely will not see much improvement in the level of diversity at the key athletics positions.

- Are you creating and communicating policies that will increase the diversity of your athletics staff?
- Are you holding those who make hiring decisions accountable for achieving your commitment?

I made that personal commitment eight years ago when I came to the NCAA. In 1994, 21.7 percent of the national office staff in management positions were female and 8.7 percent were Black. Today, 36 percent are women and 20 percent are Black, and our commitment will continue. Are the circumstances for hiring at the campus level different than hiring for a national office staff? Perhaps. Are the standards and practices for success any different? Absolutely not. It is all about commitment and accountability.

In 2000-01 and 2001-02, the NCAA budgeted $4.5 million to support the development of ethnic minorities and women by funding 17 different programs that would increase the pool of qualified individuals, enhance professional development and career advancement, and assist the membership with the potential hiring of ethnic minorities and women. Another $4.2 million has been requested for fiscal years 2002-03 and 2003-04.

There is no national policy or program that will assure success, because hiring decisions can be made only at the campus level. To improve the diversity of those we hire to teach and coach so that we match the diversity of those we recruit to educate and play sports, we must find the **will to act**...campus by campus.

rnance Process: Does Form Follow Function?

One of the hallmarks of the NCAA as an association is the depth and breadth of involvement by its membership in the governance of the organization. There are nearly 150 boards, councils, cabinets, committees and subcommittees and more than 1,200 individuals engaged in a process to develop national policy on a myriad of topics.

By the most conservative estimate, those 1,200 committee members spend more than 75,000 human hours annually proposing, evaluating, debating and voting on the policies, rules and regulations that govern intercollegiate athletics. The process represents a grass-roots-to-decision-making involvement that few associations can claim, and the result is a governance structure that is both the NCAA's greatest strength and often the source of its greatest confusion.

Intercollegiate athletics has made a commitment to self-governing that is important and unique. Given the enormous diversity of the 977 institutions that are active members of the NCAA, the natural tendency of all colleges and universities to fiercely maintain autonomy over their programs, and the highly competitive nature of intercollegiate athletics in general, it is a tribute to the collegiality of those who work in higher education that an organization like the NCAA works at all.

Is it working? It depends on whom you ask. Clearly, it's working better for Divisions II and III than for Division I.

Until 1997, all legislative proposals were voted up or down in a town-hall setting at the annual Convention with every active member institution and conference getting a vote. For the general sessions, more than 2,400 delegates would crowd together to hear proposals advanced and discussed that might or might not apply to all of them in an atmosphere reminiscent of a political caucus, often confusing for the uninitiated and nearly always off-putting for college and university presidents more accustomed to the orderly agenda of a trustees' meeting. The one-school, one-vote process left those with the greatest need to be involved (campus CEOs) with diminishing interest in the process. Surely, there was a way to simplify the process and put CEOs truly in charge.

In 1997, a governance-restructuring endeavor fully federated the three divisions. Divisions II and III continued the one-school, one-vote system at an annual Convention where all legislation is debated and voted. Both divisions gained an increased level of autonomy and, with CEOs in control of the process over the last five years, have developed their own strategic plans, set legislative goals and pushed through changes that reflect their philosophical differences. Based on both anecdotal and survey results from the Ad Hoc Review Committee (established in January 2001 by the Executive Committee to assess the NCAA federated governance structure), both divisions are happy with the results of restructuring.

Division I replaced the one-vote approach in 1997 with a legislative system based on conference representation and a final vote by an 18-member Board of Directors made up exclusively of college and university presidents. The Board, along with the Division I Management Council, meets four times a year and votes on legislation at two of those meetings. Instead of debate at an annual Convention, the voice of the membership is heard by way of feedback from institutions through the conference offices to Management Council and Board representatives.

I continue to hear general agreement that restructuring in Division I has met the goals of greater autonomy and greater authority for CEOs. The Ad Hoc Committee survey confirms these opinions. The most significant rub in the Association's governance engine, however, is whether the new structure simplified or complicated the process for Division I. In my visits with the membership, the consensus appears to be that the new structure is more complicated and less membership-friendly than before. And the result is a lack of institutional buy-in that strains the confidence of those who must implement national policy at the campus level.

As one Division I administrator told me recently, "I used to say that we at the campus level are the NCAA. Whatever the rules were, whether I agreed with all of them or not, I knew I had had a voice is their adoption. But under the new structure, I feel less and less that I'm part of the NCAA."

Officially, both the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association and the Division I-A Athletics Directors Association have voiced

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their concern with a process that they believe fails to provide the level of national debate and institutional involvement that the old structure had. At the same time, it is clear that college CEOs are generally happy with the new structure. They know that they or their colleagues have a firm hand on the governance reins and their attendance at the Convention isn't required to assure their voice is heard.

Here is a modest proposal for Division I. Consider a system that accommodates the CEOs need for orderly, time-efficient decision-making and also meets the need of institutional administrators to be a part of the decision-making process at a critical point.

- Clearly, we don't want to lose the division autonomy or CEO leadership that the new structure provides.
- At the same time, there is a nearly visceral desire from administrators and faculty for discussion, debate and a voting process that allows them to make their voices heard.
- The role of the Board of Directors should include giving values-based direction through a strategic plan to what issues should be addressed, the order in which they should be addressed and the desired outcome. The Board also should be the final authority for legislation with national policy implications (for example, academic standards).
- The role of the Management Council should be to develop legislation that with input from the cabinets and committees meets the Board's mandates. To go a step further, the Management Council also should be empowered to enact legislation of an administrative nature (for example, the appropriateness of after-practice snacks).
- Other legislation will emerge from the membership, as it always has, but voting on all legislation (except emergency/noncontroversial) should return to a once-a-year format.
- This "legislative season" approach will help focus membership attention on important and often critical issues that currently may get lost in the business-as-usual affairs of running athletics programs.
- The annual Convention would return to providing a platform for discussing the proposals and casting a nonbinding vote of recommendation that the Board or Management Council then would consider in final deliberations.

Such a structure would keep the voting balance intact among all the Division I governance bodies, would maintain the final authority of college and university presidents, and would engage the membership in a way that returns confidence — if not full consensus — to the process.

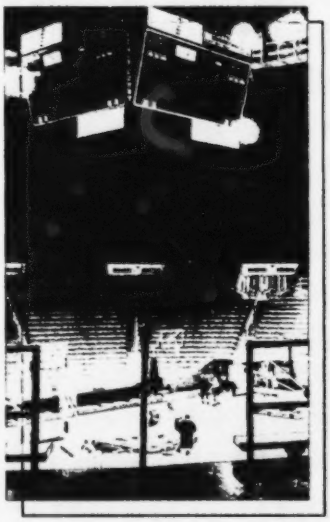
But, there are two other areas that I would challenge CEOs in all divisions to consider as critical to making the NCAA governance process a success:

1. Inform yourself about issues in college sports by engaging your campus and conference athletics administrators. Use the "legislative season" noted previously in this article to trigger an annual review of proposals with your athletics director, faculty athletics representative and senior woman administrator. If you haven't already, involve yourself at the campus level in a way that corresponds with the level of attention athletics brings to your campus.

2. Demand an efficient communications system between your office and the NCAA and your conference offices to keep you abreast of important policy discussions. Engage your conference representative on the NCAA Management Council and presidential bodies on at least a quarterly basis. Provide feedback and support of Board positions on key proposals.

The NCAA's heritage of dynamic and intelligent self-governance is as strong today as ever. The **will to act** now is to assure that the governance form follows the important functions of broad athletics input combined with presidential decision-making.

Is College Basketball in Prime Health? Or Just Prime Time?



By any number of important indicators, college basketball is the picture of health.

More NCAA member institutions sponsor the sport for both men and women than any other activity, and more than 30,000 student-athletes are participating in basketball at the NCAA collegiate level. The NCAA championships in all three divisions for both men and women attract hundreds of thousands of fans, and that number rises into the millions of those who watch televised games throughout the season. The Division I Men's and Women's Basketball Championships are among the premier sporting events annually and are the centerpieces for contracts with CBS and ESPN that go beyond TV rights to include marketing and the Internet. And the popularity of basketball at the scholastic and youth levels never has been greater.

And yet there are signs that not all is well in the world of collegiate hoops. Some of the game's most aggressive critics see the sport as a symbol of all that is wrong with intercollegiate athletics in general. They say there is too much emphasis on money and too little emphasis on education. Runaway commercialism and escalating coaches' salaries have swamped the amateur status of the sport. An expectation of year-round competition at youth levels in camps, traveling teams and extravagant tournaments has turned college recruiting into "meat markets." And the intrusion and influence of agents, runners and promoters have tarnished the game and the integrity of higher education. Even the milder critics — including college presidents — say there are too many games, too many prospects going to college for the wrong reasons and too much interference with student-athletes' educational requirements.

The concerns reached a crescendo in Division I men's basketball two years ago when the Board of Directors passed legislation that would have eliminated all summer evaluation of prospects in 2002. A standing committee charged with examining issues in college basketball and making recommendations to the Board quickly went to work and suggested a series of legislative proposals that were approved by the Board last November. Among other features, the new legislation:

- Strengthens the process for certifying summer basketball events that requires disclosure of financial information about the sources of funds for the events and how they are allocated.
- Alters the summer evaluation period to two 10-day periods in July separated by a four-day "dead period."
- Enhances educational and mentoring activities for those participating in the summer evaluation activities.
- Requires Division I colleges and universities to provide information about the financial relationships among institutions, corporations and coaches of prospects before coaching staffs can participate in the July evaluation period.

The goals of the Board are to reduce the influence of corporate and promoter money in the recruiting process, strengthen the relationship between the college and high-school communities, and educate prospects on the value of higher education and the risks of allowing their lives to be governed by those looking for the next basketball superstar.

Frankly, the Board was less than overwhelmed with the package of legislation forwarded to it to remedy the problems of college basketball. In approving the proposals, the college presidents who serve on the Board made it clear that they perceived the package as a two-year pilot effort. If there are no significant and lasting changes in either the practices or perceptions surrounding the basketball recruiting environment, the Board could well return to its no-summer-evaluation stance.

The most glaring issue in college basketball today is the abysmal graduation rate of the participants. Because the report required by the federal government measures only student-athletes who are receiving athletically related financial aid, it is difficult to get much of an accurate reading for Divisions II and III. For the most visible Division I schools, however, the overall rate of men's basketball student-athletes is 32 percent and for Blacks on those same teams, it's 24 percent. And worst of all, at 36 institutions in Division I, the graduation rate of black male basketball players is zero.

More national legislation needs to be developed to address these concerns. And the National Association of Basketball Coaches should take a leadership role in assuring that basketball coaches are part of the solution and not adding to the problem. But it is just as clear that there are issues at the campus and conference levels that could, and should, be addressed if real and lasting change is to take place. The tough question is whether any campus has the ability to change on its own.

As a college president with pressures from all directions for your athletics program to recruit, build and win, it is difficult — some would say impossible — to address such issues for your institution

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when other institutions are not doing so. What we should be pursuing is balance in college basketball between the game and academic goals; between winning and assuring that student-athletes have the opportunity to participate fully in college life; and between appropriate financial funding and kowtowing to the market influence of commercial entities, including television.

But, the "golden egg" status of Division I basketball is also the greatest hurdle to any needed change. Even if there is the **will to act**, is it practical or even possible for campuses or conferences to take action even in those areas that most agree should be addressed?

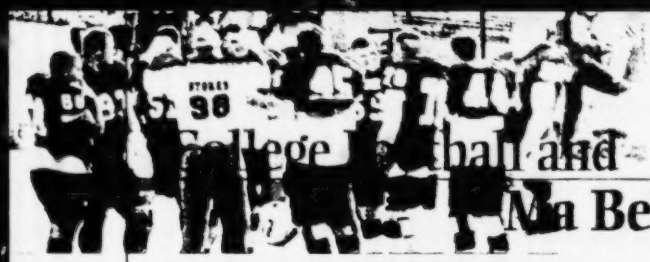
In another essay, we suggested that you bring together athletics administrators and coaches to examine issues around college sports on your campus. The state of health of college basketball is an area ripe for such a discussion. For example, here are a series of questions that campuses — individually and collectively — could consider:

- Should your campus consider standards for progress toward a degree before you will allow your basketball team to participate in postseason tournaments?

- Should you direct your coaches not to recruit prospects who clearly indicate their intention to attend college only a year or two before jumping to the pros?
- Have you studied the issue of missed class time for travel and participation in basketball and the academic impact on basketball student-athletes?
- Do conference television contracts prevent you from reducing the number of contests your team plays even by one game?
- How concerned are you about an over-emphasis on winning? Would your board of trustees or alumni permit you to write a contract for your coach that rewards academic success as much as winning?

There is no road so lonely as the path of unilateral reform. Before we can mend the ills of college basketball or seriously ask any college president individually to mandate change, higher education and intercollegiate athletics as a whole will have to answer this important question:

Is our primary interest to have our basketball programs in prime health…or on prime time?



College Football and Ma Bell

Many of us remember sportscaster Chris Schenkel posing the proverbial question each fall: "What better way to spend a autumn afternoon than watching college football?" Those few words helped sum up all the magic associated with campus life and college sports. In university towns across America, Saturday afternoon college football dominates the conversations and often the social calendar.

College football has a long and storied history as part of higher education. One of the oldest sports on campus, football also has the largest number of student-athletes participating, generates the most revenue (60 percent of all athletics income in Division I-A), uses the most resources (39 percent of all athletics expenses) and some would say brings the greatest exposure to the academy itself. It is the only sport where on any given weekend at the biggest programs, more than 100,000 fans fill stadiums and millions watch on TV as their alma mater takes on the archrival. Even at the smaller programs throughout four divisions of intercollegiate football, the game continues to hold a special status in the entire university experience. In fact, you could make the argument that it is a uniquely American treasure.

But just how well are we taking care of this asset?

In January 2001 at my recommendation, the Division I Board of Directors appointed a Football Study Oversight Committee (FSOC), composed entirely of college presidents. The committee was charged to study the Division I classification and governance structure, the NCAA's role in certifying football bowl games, pressures affecting football programs, student-athlete welfare, marketing and promotion of the game, diversity issues, and the long-term viability of college football. The FSOC has made significant progress in a number of areas. It already has recommended changes in the bowl certification process, redefined what constitutes Division I-A membership and a I-A conference, addressed out-of-season workouts and other student-athlete welfare issues.

To assist with its review of the game, the FSOC commissioned a study of 91 presidents and chancellors in Division I during the fall of 2001. The CEOs were asked to identify strengths and weaknesses of college football and to respond to a number of specific questions. Included in the positives for the game identified by the respondents were the opportunities that football provides to many who otherwise would not have access to higher education; the enriching student-athlete experience; the entertainment value to the institutional community and general public; and enhanced community relations in terms of pride, spirit and development of ties.

Two issues emerged as clear weaknesses for a large majority of CEOs at all levels of Division I — the financial status of the game and the racial diversity of coaching staffs. A total of 64 percent of Division I-A presidents and 84 percent of those in Division I-AA see the financial status of college football as a significant concern. In fact, less than 10 percent of the Division I-A CEOs see the long-term financial outlook for Division I football as "solidly positive," and none of the Division I-AA presidents responded affirmatively. Included in the responses were these comments:

- "We spend way too much money."
- "It's expensive, and few of us have revenues that even begin to cover the expenses."
- "If there is a threat hanging over football, it is the multi-million dollar stadium, locker rooms and the $2 million paid for a football coach. Only a handful of schools in this country can afford this madness..."

In terms of racial diversity of coaching staffs — where only three head coaches outside those at the historically black colleges and universities are African-American — 78 percent of the CEOs in Division I-A and 72 percent in Division I-AA see this issue as a weakness or major weakness. (See the **Will to Act** essay "The Diversity Hiring Failure" for a discussion about diversity issues within intercollegiate athletics.)

CEOs also expressed concern about academics and athletics balance in the sport, about the widening gap between the "haves" and "have nots," and about an overemphasis on winning. The final report of the Football Study Oversight Committee will go to the Division I Board of Directors in October.

Specifically excluded from the committee's charge was discussion of a playoff structure for Division I-A. However, one of my

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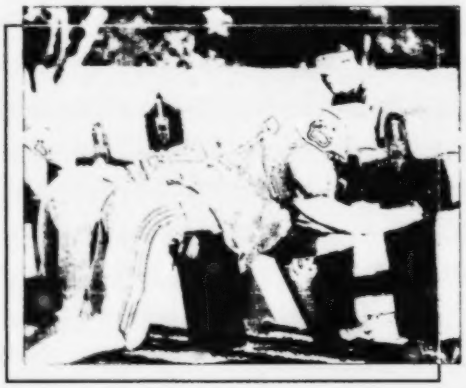
major concerns at the time I made the recommendation for a comprehensive study of Division I football was the appropriate role of institutional CEOs at the campus, conference and national level over postseason competition. In fact, I see Division I-A postseason football as one of the most divisive issues in college sports. College presidents also weighed in on the current postseason football structure in Division I-A in the FSOC survey. There are two very interesting findings I would bring to your attention.

- Nearly half of Division I-A presidents perceive the current bowl/championship system to be a "weakness" or "major weakness" of Division I football.
- Nearly half of the Division I-A presidents believe the current method of selecting teams for bowls is a "weakness" or "major weakness" of Division I football.

The Football Study Oversight Committee has been true to its charge. It has attended to the long-term viability of the sport of football. But, given the concerns of college presidents and others regarding the financial and image future for football, it is appropriate and timely now to build on the work of the committee. Concerned individuals at nearly every level have argued that decision-making regarding Division I-A postseason football often has been without coordination or "big picture" impact. The **will to act** for Division I-A CEOs now should be to encourage a coalition of key stakeholders that is president-directed, vision-driven and focused on what postseason football should look like in five years. In the balance is the continued health of this American treasure. And as is true with many big-picture decisions, timing is critical.

As often as college football is seen as intercollegiate athletics' greatest asset, it frequently is also perceived as the "elephant in the living room." It is both the metaphor for most of those things that fans and the public see as positive in college sports and nearly all of those things they see as negative. The biggest problem with elephants in the living room, of course, is the attention they draw to themselves. A few years before "Ma Bell," another great American treasure, was deregulated in the mid-'80s, it embarked on an advertising campaign around the theme: "We may be the only telephone company in town, but we try not to act like it."

Obviously, the campaign came too late for Ma Bell. But, there may be a lesson here for college football. Sometimes the difference between a perceived asset and an out-of-control liability is timely foresight.

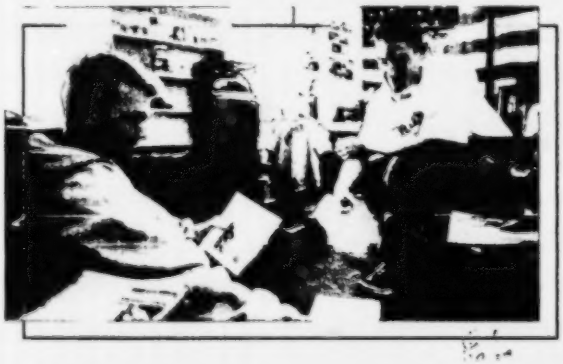


The Funding Dilemma

One of the prevailing misperceptions about college sports over the last 20 years is that vast amounts of profits are being made through gate, television and other revenue streams. Fueling the notion, of course, are Division I conference television packages, well-publicized salaries of some high-profile coaches at a million dollars or more and the NCAA's own $6-plus billion contracts with CBS and ESPN. By the latest reckoning, higher education is bringing in about $4 billion annually in revenue from its athletics programs. These revenue-side data points generally are the only ones being fed to the public by the media and certainly add to the misperception of immeasurable profits. Why wouldn't you believe that college sports are awash with money?

The other half of the story is one with which the great majority of you are familiar. Except for a handful of programs, colleges and universities are spending more than they make with their athletics endeavors. While there may be $4 billion annually in revenue from intercollegiate athletics, higher education within the NCAA is spending about $5.1 billion annually on college sports — a net deficit of more than a billion dollars and an increase of at least $300 million annually over the last two years.

The revenues and expenses report compiled from data submitted by member schools shows that the number of programs in Division I-A that have revenues remaining after expenses (and excluding institutional support) has fallen from 48 to 40 in the last two years. Adding to the elite status of those 40 programs where revenues exceed expenses is the fact that the average margin has increased from $3.8 million two years ago to $5.3 million today. And the average deficit for the others has increased from $3.3 million to $3.8 million. Divisions II and III aren't exempt from the spending spree. After a decade of modest increases in Division II deficits, the average in 1999 jumped 21 percent for the 1997-99 reporting period and rose above the million-dollar mark for the first time. And while revenue figures are not kept for Division III, expenses for that division jumped 30 percent from 1997 to 1999 — by far the highest single reporting-period increase since the NCAA has been tracking the numbers.



Two points are clear from the research to date: No program is exempt from rising costs, and the gap in Division I between the "haves" and "have nots" is increasing. What is not so clear is the long-term impact on intercollegiate sports if the financial trends continue, and the feasibility of colleges and universities subsidizing more of their athletics programs.

All this has created what I and others have termed an "arms race," an inevitable spiraling of facility expansion, coaching and administrative salaries, and operation expenses. In all honesty, that probably is too simplistic a characterization. While some positive outcomes have resulted from the growth and investments made in college sports, one has to question whether we have become a victim of our own success.

Manifested generally in Division I, the issue is less an arms race and more a funding dilemma. I believe that the angst most observers have over the rapidly escalating financial concerns in college sports is the tension that is increasing between finding new revenue streams to offset the costs and the impact that pursuing those new streams has on such things as self-sufficiency, competitive equity, academic mission and even diversity hiring. Here's how the dilemma typically plays out.

A funding philosophy in Division I since 1978 has dictated that programs should operate as self-sufficiently as possible. Yet, we've seen the number of programs that break even or better declining from one year to the next. All the rest of the programs are spending at a faster pace than they are generating new revenue streams, and, as already noted, the gap between those with sufficient resources and those without widens with each passing season. As the need for new revenue streams increases, preseason and postseason games and playoffs are added, which puts additional pressure on winning. But winning is affected by a change in competitive equity created by the resources gap.

Suddenly, the "Catch 22" element of the funding dilemma is pandemic.

As the scramble for new revenue sources intensifies and corporations first become targets and then partners with athletics programs, charges of commercialism fall on college sports. The epicenter of such criticism is a disturbance of the folklore notion that college sports, uniquely among higher education's many enterprises, should not depend on corporate American for support. The Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, the media and other critics have called college presidents to task for

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besmirching the good names of amateurism and higher education with their ties to large corporations. Yet, the rest of higher education pursues commercial dollars; names buildings, research projects, colleges, professorships and programs after those commercial entities; and is praised for partnering with corporate America. But the same behavior model when applied to college athletics is labeled crass over-commercialism. Even the Olympics has successfully engaged corporate America in helping to finance both the Games and preparation for the Games, while college sports is chastised for turning to commercial support.

The funding dilemma — the very real need in Division I to pay for college sports from sources other than college budgets — has significantly increased concern that higher education has looked the other way with both recruiting choices that bring prospects to campus with little interest in a degree and the resulting general drift from academic mission. It is even arguably so that this dilemma is part of the cause for intercollegiate athletics' failure to hire diverse coaching and administrative staffs. The pressure to win, to sustain funding sources and to assure success has dampened institutions' willingness to "take chances" with untested coaches and athletics directors of color or who are women.

The real question is whether intercollegiate athletics is still meeting its basic purpose and mission of educating young people to be tomorrow's leaders or whether we have lost our way in attempting to meet today's demands of wins and losses and sold-out arenas.

This funding dilemma is no simple problem. If the answers were easy, we would not have the concern about overspending that has plagued college sports since the beginning of the NCAA nearly a century ago. Exploring this and other issues for Division I is a task force of the Board of Directors. A report from the task force, including research and analysis by leading economists on key financial data, will be available in October or November. The task force has been charged with examining a number of areas of concern, including a comprehensive study of economic factors in college sports. The goal is to develop data that will help CEOs make decisions based on a history of spending behaviors over time for a broad range of institutions.

In the meantime, as individual members of the larger NCAA association, each institution has the autonomy — and responsibility — to set individual financial policies. But where does reasonable investment in athletics as an educational component, entertainment for the university community or even a development tool end and misdirected fiscal folly begin? Are the expenses of colleges' sports aligned with the mission of an institution's athletics programs? Are our athletics budgets aligned with our broad-based programs or do the majority of our resources go to elite programs? Are more new dollars allocated to athletics than any other aspect of the campus? Is responding to the funding dilemma as simple as making athletics live within the university's means? I urge CEOs to consider answers to these questions for their campuses, and to find the **will to act** where the answers suggest fiscal policy different from that currently in place.

This essay has largely explored issues around the financial behaviors in Division I because that is where the greatest body of relevant data — and many would say the greatest problems — exists. But make no mistake, how the Joneses and those trying to keep up with the Joneses spend and seek new revenue to support their spending habits is part of the funding dilemma for every institution and every level of college sports.

Reputation and Clean Rooms

Over the last four years and at the direction of the NCAA Executive Committee, the Association has invested in significant research to benchmark the perception of college sports and the NCAA itself. The research has helped the national office take the lead in developing a multi-year public affairs plan aimed at reputation management and engaging our new media and corporate partners in ways that enhance the attributes of intercollegiate athletics and higher education.

With the help of four national research firms, we surveyed key constituents within the membership, the media and the public (see the accompanying list for a summary of results). We conducted focus group interviews with college fans and non-fans. And we looked specifically at the impact of two major sports — football and basketball.

Four major themes emerged from the research. Some of the results represent good news and some not so good.

- The NCAA does a good job of embracing the "competitive spirit" and reinforcing the values of competition and fair play. In fact, the NCAA is synonymous with college sports.
- Education is not strongly linked with the NCAA image. All constituents believe intercollegiate athletics' top priority should be assuring that student-athletes earn a college degree. But most believe that such help has become a low priority.
- The image of the NCAA and intercollegiate athletics is directly linked with connotations of big business and money. All constituents believe making money should be a relatively low priority, but most respondents believe too much energy is devoted to chasing dollars and that education is compromised in the process.
- Finally, all groups believe schools should follow the same rules, but most constituents believe all schools "cheat all the time."

There is confusion even at our own member institutions about where the role of the NCAA as an association ends and the role of the conference or local campus begins. There is little public understanding that most athletics programs must be subsidized by an institution's general budget or that 94 percent of the Association's revenue goes to the membership as direct payments or in the form of championships, goods and services. Hardly anyone understands how the NCAA works, how rules are proposed and approved, how policy is developed, how salaries for coaches are determined, or any of a myriad of other details about the operation of intercollegiate athletics.

It is clear that cleaning up some misperceptions is in order.

What is also clear from the research is that all of us — campus, conference and national office; large public university or small private college; Divisions I, II or III; university president or assistant coach — are being painted by the same brush. How much money is budgeted for athletics or how little, how student-athletes are treated by national policy or team rules, the perceived hubris with which we conduct the affairs of college sports, whatever the utterances and actions are of each of us affects the image of all of us. We're in this together. You are the NCAA, and the NCAA is college sports.

Image and reputation — what we stand for as the whole of college sports and as our part — are measured largely by our actions. We say we stand for conducting our athletics programs within the mission of higher education. We say our student-athletes are to be fully integrated into the student body. We say the collegiate model for sport is unique and wholly different from the professional model. But based on the results of research, our publics and our colleagues have judged our behavior and found it lacking.

Too many of us in college sports have done a poor job of telling the story of intercollegiate athletics in general and of student-athletes in particular. In fact, one of my biggest disappointments over the last eight years as NCAA president has been the steady decline in how we support one another and a rising emphasis on our own self-protecting agendas. How often when you read a column that excoriates college sports or the NCAA have you called the reporter to set the record straight where it was misrepresented? How often have you stayed silent while your coaches or athletics administrators "blame" the NCAA for national policy that a majority of member institutions — yours included, perhaps — helped put in place?

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As members of the NCAA — as a part of the whole — college presidents must lead an effort to redefine the image of intercollegiate athletics. By engaging the **will to act** in this effort, you will enhance the reputation of your own institution to attract prospective students, media, donors and even previously disenfranchised alumni. Here are specific recommendations to consider:

- Embrace and use key NCAA messages (see accompanying listing) and discuss them with your faculty and athletics staff.
- Ask high-profile coaches and administrators to use the media platforms they command to speak about the importance of athletics programs being a part of the total higher education experience within the NCAA structure.
- Invite the NCAA public relations team to your campus to discuss what the Association's public affairs plan means for your campus. For information about these campus visits, contact Gail Dent (gdent@ncaa.org), NCAA assistant director of public relations.
- Examine the actions of athletics policy and personnel to determine if the student-athlete comes first in decision-making on your campus.
- Through your relationships with local media, challenge reporters when they fail to give accurate facts or characterize the NCAA or intercollegiate athletics in ways that damage the image of higher education.
- Use local forums as a starting point to tell the story of intercollegiate athletics and to build momentum for a new understanding of college sports.
- "Own" your role in the image problems of college sports, become a part of the solution and recognize that an association's reputation is made member by member.

A university relations administrator told the story a few years ago about an assistant who had a Calvin and Hobbes comic strip taped on a filing cabinet. The story, I believe, helps put in perspective our role in managing the image of intercollegiate athletics. In the comic strip, Calvin was standing in his room, surrounded by clutter while his mother berated him for not cleaning his room as directed. After she left the room with parting instructions to get it cleaned, Calvin complained to Hobbes that what he really needed was a good PR program. The university relations assistant had added a handwritten note beneath the strip that read: "What you need is to clean your room."

In image management, as in most other endeavors, actions speak louder than words.

Image and Reputation Research, 1999 to 2002

The NCAA has conducted a series of research projects over the last four years geared at measuring the image and reputation of the NCAA and intercollegiate athletics. The following three firms have conducted the research: Louis Harris & Associates, Fleishman-Hillard Public Relations, and Landor Associates.

Project scope

- Louis Harris & Associates and Landor Associates were commissioned in 1998 to create an empirical foundation to bridge the gap between how the NCAA and intercollegiate athletics want to be perceived and how they are perceived by both internal and external constituents. The survey was conducted with 3,393 interviews, including 1,884 internal constituents from all three divisions and all levels of the membership; 1,300 individuals in the general public; and 209 members of the media.
- Fleishman-Hillard Public Relations conducted a communications audit of 158 CEOs, athletics directors, senior woman administrators, faculty athletics representatives and conference commissioners from all three divisions. Designed primarily to learn how these individuals receive information and how they want to receive communications in the future, the audit also examined perceptions about the NCAA's mission and most critical issues.
- Landor Associates conducted brand image research in January and February 2002. Focus groups were conducted in three cities (Boston, Chicago and Charlotte) and an on-line survey of 994 respondents was conducted. The research objective was to understand the current NCAA brand imagery.

Project Results

The following are major themes within the 1998 study by Louis Harris & Associates:

- Internal and external constituents agree with the NCAA president's No. 1 priority of keeping the interests of the student-athlete at the heart of the NCAA decision-making. However, they feel this is an area where the NCAA is not doing well.
- Internal and external constituents agree that generating revenue for the NCAA and /or member schools should be a lower priority. However, they believe generating money is what the NCAA pays the most attention to.
- The NCAA is seen as generating enormous revenues, but too few believe these revenues benefit member institutions or student-athletes. They have no clear understanding of where the money goes.
- All constituents believe all NCAA institutions should follow the rules, but large percentages of all groups believe that most major college programs regularly violate NCAA rules.
- Internal constituents support the concept behind Title IX. However, that support is thin and dissipates with regard to specific policies.
- The descriptive word most commonly applied to the NCAA is "powerful." The media and public also view the NCAA as commercialized.
- The general population is not familiar with how the NCAA works or what it does.
- The NCAA is seen as doing a good job at providing a high level of competition, conducting championships and protecting the safety of student-athletes.
- Most constituents, especially internal one, believe money has a significant influence on collegiate athletics.
- Majorities of all groups surveyed think revenues from commercial activities are not distributed to member institutions.
- The media get most of their information from the media. The second most important source of information is coaches and high-profile administrators.
- When asked to identify the most important issues facing intercollegiate athletics, external constituents named student-athlete academic performance. Internal constituents (member institutions) named money and funding.

The Fleishman-Hillard communications audit yielded these important findings:

- There is disagreement about the mission of the NCAA. Most internal constituents see governance as the mission of the Association, but chief executive officers view promoting intercollegiate athletics as the mission. No group named student-athlete welfare as the No. 1 mission objective.
- CEOs did, however, cite student-athlete welfare as the No. 1 issue facing the NCAA and intercollegiate athletics. Other important issues were recruiting, academic standards and Title IX.

Results from the Landor Associates research included:

- The NCAA is synonymous with college sports, namely college football and basketball. Beyond college sports, the brand has limited recognition.
- The NCAA is considered big business intent on making money for the benefit of the NCAA, and this image is generated through the major college sports event sponsorships and high-profile athletes who are more interested in sports than academics.
- The NCAA and college sports are not differentiated from professional sports. However, most respondents feel the NCAA and college sports are a more pure form of competition relative to professional sports.
- Although the behavior of some high-profile athletes in college sports tends to damage the image of the NCAA and intercollegiate athletics, it is the "average" student-athlete competing for the love of the game that has the potential to build differentiation and strengthen the image.
- Respondents believe that educating the student-athlete should be the ultimate goal of the NCAA. However, the big-business aspect of the brand suggests the NCAA and intercollegiate athletics compromise education for the purpose of sports competition.

Four messages tell the story of the NCAA and intercollegiate athletics.

1. The NCAA is a membership-led association of colleges and universities with athletics programs; conferences and affiliated organizations.

- Presidents, athletics directors, senior women administrators, and faculty representatives from member colleges and universities, and conference representatives vote on NCAA legislation.
- Student-athletes have an organized voice in the NCAA through the Student-Athlete Advisory Committees (SAACs).
- The NCAA conducts 87 championships in 22 sports each year in which more than 44,000 student-athletes compete to be the national champion.
- The integrity of student-athletes, college sports and athletics participation is protected through legislation and governance.

2. We are committed to protecting the best interests of student-athletes.

- Through committees at the campus, conference and national level, student-athletes have a voice in the governance of college sports.
- Time demands on student-athletes within their sport are limited both during the week and by the length of the season through NCAA bylaws.
- Graduation rates of student-athletes at every member school are made public to help prospects make decisions about their choice of a college or university.
- The safety of student-athletes is supported through playing rules, research and recommended sports-medicine policy.
- The amateur status of student-athletes is protected by legislative standards.

3. We are committed to providing a quality education to student-athletes.

- NCAA initial- and continuing-eligibility requirements, as well as individual college admissions and graduation standards, assure a fundamental academic foundation as a condition for athletics participation.
- On average, student-athletes graduate at higher rates than their counterparts in the student body.
- Academic standards are continually being monitored and revised to assure quality education opportunities for the broad range of student-athletes.
- Through various local and national initiatives, the education of student-athletes extends beyond the classroom to include leadership development.

4. We are committed to supporting athletics participation opportunities for student-athletes.

- More than 360,000 student-athletes are participating in college sports at 977 member colleges and universities.
- The NCAA conducts 87 championships in 22 sports each year in which more than 44,000 student-athletes compete to be the national collegiate champion.
- By promoting intercollegiate athletics and higher education through its agreements with CBS, ESPN and corporate partners, the NCAA helps generate funding for these athletics opportunities. NCAA member institutions spend in excess of $4 billion annually to provide participation opportunities, and 94 cents of every dollar that comes to the NCAA goes back to member schools in direct dollars, championships or services.
- NCAA bylaws provide for equitable competition among colleges and universities and eligibility standards. While NCAA playing rules provide fair play, NCAA recruiting rules and eligibility standards provide equal opportunities for access to intercollegiate athletics.
- The integrity of student-athletes, college sports and athletics participation is protected through legislation, governance initiatives and administrative policy against corrupting outside influences.

In short, the NCAA and intercollegiate athletics are committed to the best interests, education and athletics participation of student-athletes.

The Will of the Membership

As I developed this collection of essays, I have contemplated the final piece. It seemed appropriate to conclude with sage advice about the great advances coming our way and how they will impact higher education and intercollegiate athletics. Maybe I could assume the role of the futurist and provide enlightened predictions about the course of college sports. The truth is, I'm no better at predicting the future with accuracy than anyone else.

This I know, however. Hundreds of thousands of young men and women have benefited from the self-discipline, teamwork and life lessons that intercollegiate athletics teaches. They have done so within the environs of higher education and, in the vast majority of cases, have fulfilled the ancient Greek concept of testing mind and body. That is an ideal that has uniquely set intercollegiate athletics in the United States apart from all other sports models around the world. It is a system worthy of continued support.

I spoke recently to the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics, and I discussed a phrase that embodies all the NCAA is about — the will of the membership. Like all associations, the National Collegiate Athletic Association exists because its members can accomplish as an organization what no individual member could do acting alone, a "greater good" that serves student-athletes in their test of mind and body.

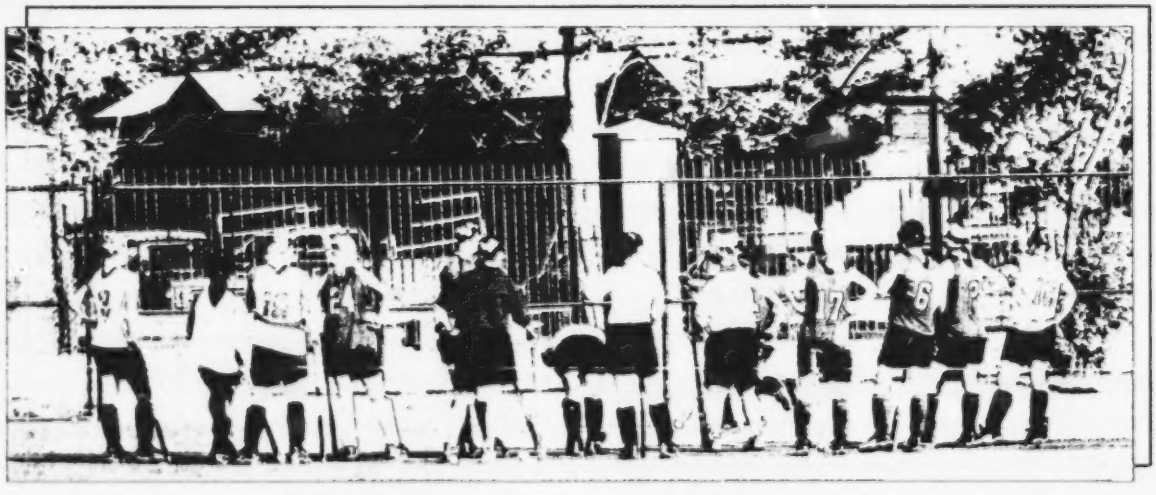
Exercising this will of the membership has guided the Association through nearly a century of evolution. From creation of the organization in 1906 to creation of the national office in 1952 to creation of the current governance structure in 1997, the will of the membership — sometimes expressed by as narrow a margin as one vote — has superseded the agendas and special interests of individual institutions.

Of all the topics identified in this collection of essays, three are of special interest to college and university presidents: academic reform, governance and athletics funding. In significant ways, the future of intercollegiate athletics will be shaped by how those issues are addressed and resolved.

Academic reform is important because it is at the heart of the enterprise. Here is where intercollegiate athletics must fulfill its promise to prospective student-athletes and their parents that we will educate and provide athletics opportunities. We are rich in data with how to do successfully. The question at hand is whether our resolve for protecting the integrity of higher education will withstand the attack of special-interest groups who see their agendas for athletics success imperiled by the proposed changes.

Addressing the role of presidents and athletics administrators in the national governance process is essential to reconnecting athletics with academics on campus. The discontent that now exists among those charged with implementing national policy over how such policy is proposed, debated and ratified is a thorn in the body politic of college sports. At the same time, I have grave concerns that the decline in broad CEO involvement has deprived intercollegiate athletics of the diverse scrutiny required to achieve maximum value and has calloused presidents to their ownership of key issues.

And finally, everybody involved in our enterprise should be challenged by how intercollegiate athletics is funded, at what levels and from which sources. The pressure to make ends meet threatens to compromise many of the core values we collectively hold dear. Keeping up with the Joneses clearly has persuaded many in college sports to pursue someone else's reality over that which should be their own.



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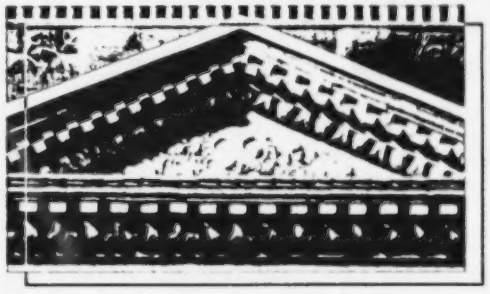

Throughout this **Will to Act** series, you have been encouraged to exercise your will on intercollegiate athletics at the campus level, also. In an earlier commentary I wrote that there is no road so lonely as the path of unilateral reform. And yet, the "greater good" must also be served campus by campus. Many of the problems we face seem nearly insurmountable because we are so divided on the proper solution. We have resorted to a "bible" of rules that in truth is probably 10 percent sound policy and 90 percent closing loopholes. At times, it appears that our efforts at creating new borders for our behavior are exceeded only by our violation of the spirit in which those borders were established. We already have called into question in the minds of our colleagues on campus, our student-athletes, the media and the public whether the ideal of testing mind and body will prevail or whether we will give in to our instincts to merely build temples to sports management.

In all likelihood, intercollegiate athletics and the NCAA will "keep on keeping on." The gap between the "haves" and "have nots" will continue to widen, and yet the will of the membership will provide enough of a level playing field that broad segments of the membership can compete against one another. Intercollegiate athletics has "succeeded" beyond the wildest imagination of those 13 college presidents who signed articles of confederation 96 years ago to create the NCAA. Our events dominate calendars, fill the media and are the envy of the nonprofessional sports world.

When I spoke to NACDA earlier in the summer of 2002, I related a personal story about the role of intercollegiate athletics in my life. As a youth, I was shy and reluctant to even try to fit in, and it was athletics that first gave me a sense of self-worth. In fact, it was a playground experience that was my rite of passage from awkward youth to athlete and to a life in athletics. At the age of 12, I moved with my family from the small Illinois town of Equality to the big city of Detroit, and my natural shyness kept me from joining any school activities. Finally one day, the kids were choosing up sides for a sandlot game of football — in which we were using a softball for the football. The sides were uneven, and I was the last chosen to square up the two teams. My great moment came when I made a one-handed catch in the end zone for the winning touchdown. And from that moment forward, I knew where I belonged and how I would fit in.

The future of intercollegiate athletics should be as simple as that. You teach. You provide opportunities for young people to test mind and body. You give them a chance to fit in.

The future of the NCAA and college sports rests with you. You must exercise the will of the membership for the greater good — the welfare and best interests of student-athletes. That should guide your **will to act**.

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